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# LIFE

IN THIS ISSUE

THE DANGER OF WAR  
AND OUR ABILITY TO FACE IT  
—  
CHURCHILL ON PEARL HARBOR  
—  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOMB;  
PART 2 OF A SERIES

OMIC EXPLOSION

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# WAR CAN COME; WILL WE BE READY?

## LOUIS JOHNSON TALKS AND CARRIES A BIG AX, BUT HIS WORDS ARE STRONGER THAN HIS WEAPONS

Louis Johnson, U.S. Secretary of Defense, was saying it every way he knew how. He had put it profanely: we were prepared "to lick hell out of Joe Stalin." He had said it casually: yes, this country was "in grand shape" militarily. Last week, saying it more formally, he told the Federal Bar Association that our defenses "as of today are, in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, myself and the President, sufficient unto the needs of the hour."

As it happened, the hour (the noon hour of St. Valentine's Day, in the fifth year of the atomic age) was somewhat later than he thought. For in Moscow that day Soviet Russia and Communist China were signing a mutual-aid treaty which grimly proclaimed itself sufficient unto the needs of the next 30 years. Presently the ceremony was attested by wirephotos (below) which were disturbingly reminiscent of treaty-signing pictures that had come out of Moscow and Berlin some years before. The signatories, now as then, included some men of smug and impassive mien who had been rather aptly described a fortnight earlier by one of Secretary Johnson's subordinates, Air Secretary Stuart Symington, as "those who reiterate America must be destroyed." These men now possessed, he said, "the world's largest army, largest air force and largest submarine fleet, and if they chose to mount a surprise atomic attack against any part of the United States . . . we have no sure defense against such an attack."

The country could only wonder how we could be in such grand shape if we were not only outnumbered but subject to atomic ambush as well. It would be pleasant to believe Secretary Johnson and unpleasant to believe Secretary Symington, but impossible to believe both.

Which one was right? Louis Johnson had claimed that by "whittling away" at "waste and fat," and by holding the military establishment to an arbitrarily imposed \$13.5 billion budget, he was actually strengthening our armed force. Yet a good many men among his own top brass, who were keeping their mouths shut, felt that minimum security demanded that we spend \$4 billion more a year. (Nobody was talking yet about *maximum* security, simply because it might run to \$100 billion a year.) If they were right, then their boss and his boss,



**JOHNSON & BOSS** spoke soothingly of our preparedness when Joint Chiefs returned from Asiatic errand.

President Truman, were guilty of stubborn wishful thinking about our safety.

Last week Joseph and Stewart Alsop, in two columns which they titled "Mr. Johnson's Lies" and which their editors softened to "Mr. Johnson's Untruths," nailed Mr. Johnson to the mast. They granted he had sliced away waste and fat but accused him of severing arteries and tendons. He was, they said, "practicing what amounts to a confidence trick upon the nation."

If so, and if Russia was building an offensive war machine while we were not, the nation did not seem to be greatly upset about it—yet. LIFE correspondents, keeping their ears open all over the country, heard little last week to indicate that national defense or the coming of the hydrogen bomb or the passing of the U.S. copyright on the atomic bomb or even war and peace were on every tongue. People wanted to talk about anything else but.

Very soon, however, events will dictate some important national decisions. Then our national leaders will have to know whether the people are behind them or ahead of them. The decisions will affect our foreign policy and all its elements, especially the element of military power. We must decide where and how to build the situation which, as Secretary Acheson says, "will extend the area of possible agreement; that is, to create strength instead of the weakness which exists in many quarters."

What kind of strength does this mean? It means the only kind that the Soviets respect—the kind

that will give Mr. Acheson a diplomatic hole card of real power and will enable him to deal calmly and firmly with either phony peace offensives or military threats.

We must also decide what it is worth to be strong. Taking Army Secretary Gordon Gray's word for it, that World War II will cost one trillion, 400 million dollars, we must decide what we are willing to pay in money, effort and ingenuity to try to keep World War III—the one we are now in—from becoming a shooting war. The price of not preventing war was made more frightening by a Navy scientist's guess that we might suffer 1.5 million casualties on the first day of war and by military estimates that our big problem would be how to survive the first 18 months, while our potential power was mobilized to counter the enemy's stock-piled power and eventually take the offensive in the traditional American way of waging war. Some of the decisions must be made right away. This year of 1950 may be the last in which the U.S. will be able to make its choices of its own free will instead of having them made for us by the Soviets.

It is with full knowledge that the issues are unpleasant to face, and too dangerous to ignore, that LIFE this week, with an atomic explosion on its cover, examines the dangers that beset us and our readiness to meet them. Here we appraise the military balance of power and the danger of a shooting war, so far as these can be measured without breaches of security. These are some of the questions we shall try to answer:

**How might we be attacked? (pp. 20, 21)**

**How can we avoid surprise? (pp. 22, 23)**

**How badly off are our Army, Navy and Air Force? (pp. 24-29)**

**How are we making A-bombs? (pp. 90-100)**

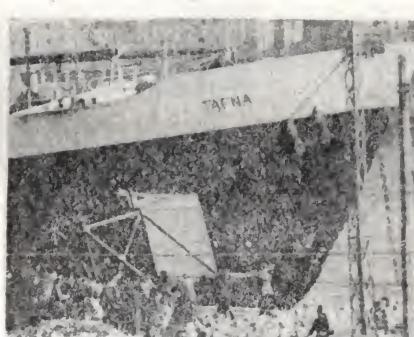
**How completely would A-bombs wreck a U.S. city? (pp. 81-89)**

**How do people feel about the dangers we face? (pp. 37-40)**

**How does LIFE feel about them? (p. 30)**



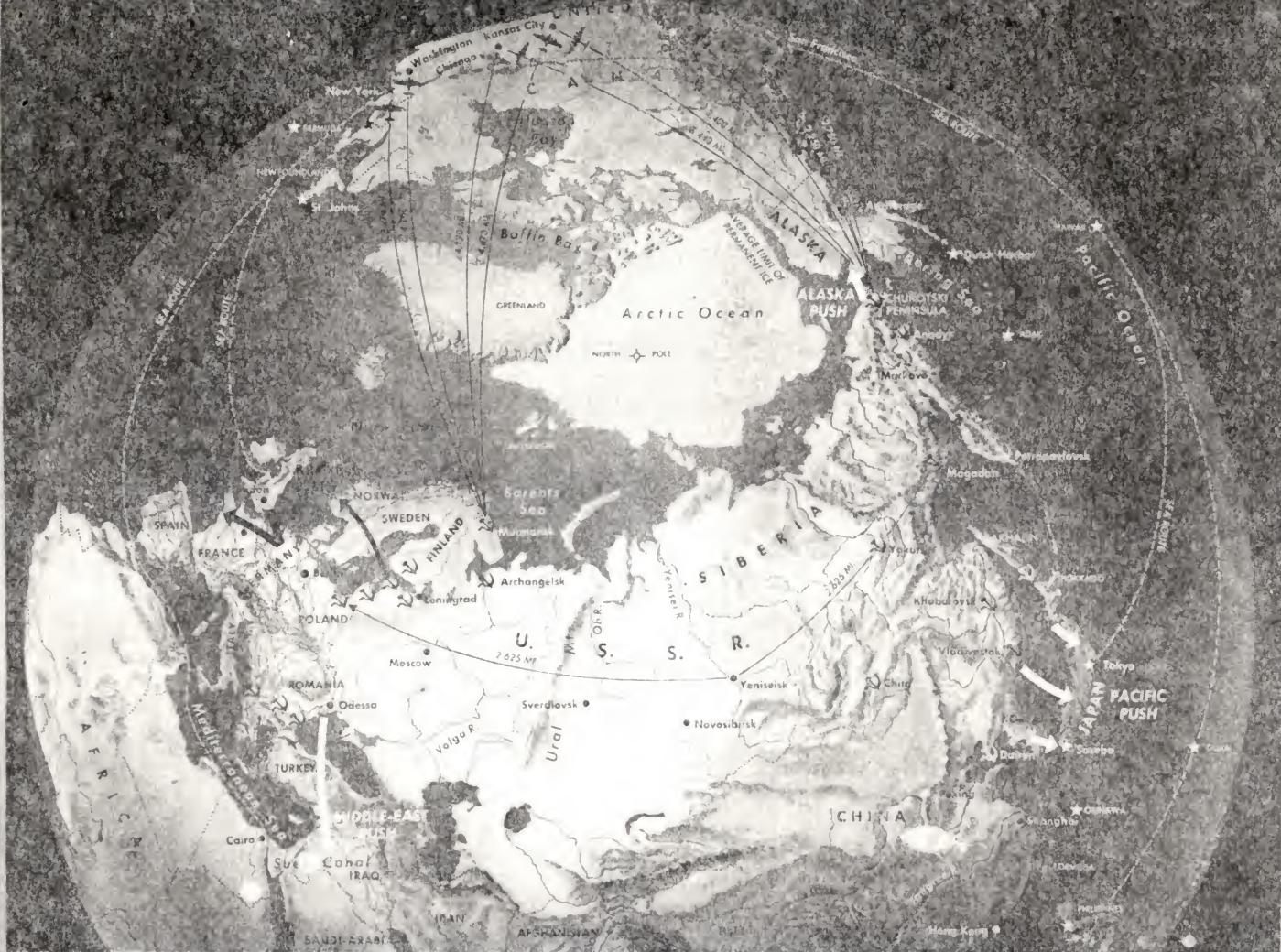
**MOSCOW TREATY** is signed by Vishinsky while Molotov (left), Stalin and Mao bind nations in Red tie.



**FRENCH RIOT** by Reds at Nice dumps shipment in protest against sending arms to French in Indo-China.



**BERLIN RALLY** by 5,000 Reds, barred from French sector meeting, is part of drive to get the Allies out.



**SOVIET BOMBERS COULD REACH U.S.** along routes shown on this map, which rolls down on Eurasian land mass and across North Pole toward Canada and U.S. The Atlantic and Midwest are within range of Murmansk-based bombers, which would need

aerial refueling to get back home. Targets on Pacific coast and as far east as Chicago could be reached from eastern Siberia. Russia's growing two-ocean submarine fleet could harass ship lanes (dotted lines) and might hit U.S. coastal cities with guided missiles.

## HOW COULD SOVIET ATTACK COME?

**THE REDS, WHOSE WAR PRODUCTION FAR OUTSTRIPS OURS, MIGHT BASE STRATEGY ON A QUICK KNOCKOUT**

The danger of war is seen best in one compelling fact: the Soviets are preparing for war (chart, left). They are spending tremendous manpower and a quarter of their income to build up a huge military machine. Their satellite armies, including China's, more than double Soviet numerical strength. Their civilian support outside Russia already exceeds Hitler's fifth column. It is led by Communists like Thoreau of France and Togliatti of Italy, who openly seek high political office while their party is a potential aid to Soviet military moves.

The chart at left on the opposite page shows how vastly Russian military strength exceeds America's, both in "forces in being" and production of weapons. The U.S. Air Force is supplied with 1,200 new planes a year. Russia, with its growing industrial proletariat, is building 7,000 airplanes a year. They include many conventional fighters of the type used in World War II for ground support but also many modern jets and long-range bombers of the B-29 type—and possibly better. Russia, never a naval power after Japan's navy sank the czar's fleet at Tsushima in 1905, now has a more power-

ful undersea fleet than Germany had at the start of the last war. Its 270 submarines include the latest Schnorkel-equipped U-boats which Germany developed too late in World War II. To oppose these, the U.S. Navy has a far superior surface fleet. But the work horse of antisubmarine warfare, the destroyer, is in short supply. There are only 136 destroyers in commission, plus a rusting and increasingly outmoded moth-ball fleet of 204 more. Americans confidently assume that U.S. industrial capacity would restore dominance in weapons if war came. But meanwhile the Russian advantage increases relentlessly, and the advantage in conventional armaments can be decisive, now that Russia has broken the atomic-bomb monopoly which had made Americans feel secure. Americans at last must realize that, in the era of long-range atomic war, America itself is finally vulnerable to sudden attack.

An opening blow by the Soviets could be a surprise atomic bombing of American cities and industrial targets. Russia today has a striking power not possessed in the last war either by Germany, which sent bombers only as far as Iceland, or Japan, which

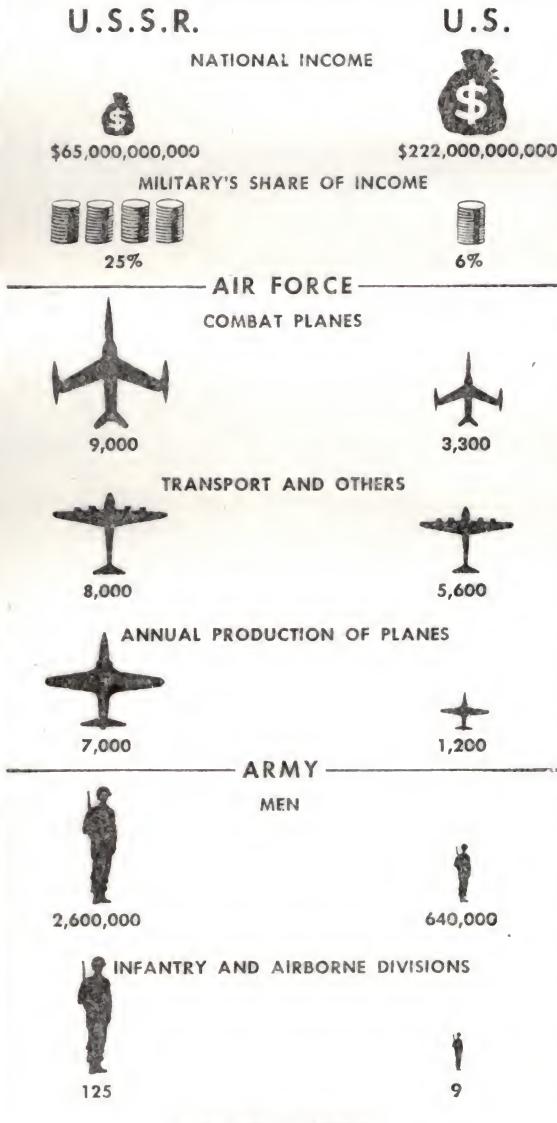
as a scare gesture shelled the Oregon and California coasts from submarines and sent bomb-laden balloons floating aimlessly toward the Pacific Coast.

Russia at war presumably would try to knock out the U.S., now without an adequate radar-warning network (next page), before a superior force could be mobilized to take the offensive. It might launch a "disaster attack" in which long-range bombers would be thrown against American cities with the suddenness of Pearl Harbor but with far greater force. Cities from Seattle to Boston might be atomized in coordinated raids. The offensive could be sustained better if Soviet land armies first took Western Europe and the Middle East (maps, left).

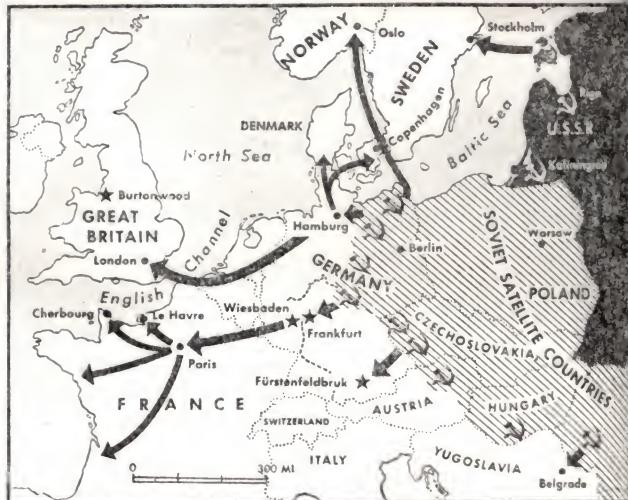
But most U.S. military men believe, despite Soviet preparation and potential, that Russia could not confidently go to war for at least two years, even if her present strategy of trying to gain her expansive ends by threats and pressure proves insufficient. In those two years, by serious effort, the U.S. could make itself strong enough to diminish Russian confidence and reduce the danger to the world.

## RED MILITARY ADVANTAGE GROWS

Since secrecy hides most military statistics, this chart is based largely on well-qualified estimates. Included are main comparable elements of military forces of both powers. The U.S. Navy's mothball fleet is not indicated. Nor are the Navy's 5,500 combat planes or 3,000 trainers, which are essentially part of the carrier force and thus help create our superior surface fleet, shown at bottom of chart.



**EASTWARD ATTACK** could aim at quick destruction of U.S. bases in Alaska, to be followed by invasion from Siberia, an area the Red army has been stock-piling for years. Neutralizing Alaska would facilitate bombing of the U.S. from eastern Siberian bases.



**WESTWARD ATTACK** could hurl Red armies across Europe along most or all routes shown on the map above. By taking Norway and France, the Soviets would gain vital air and submarine bases as well as jump-off points for an invasion of England.



## EDITORIAL

### THE ELEMENTAL FACT OF 1950

This is the age of obliteration. Formal war between the possessors of nuclear weapons means the obliteration of society as most of humankind—Communist and non-Communist—now knows it. Therefore it is necessary to avoid war, to control nuclear weapons and to fashion a formula for permanent peace.

**Opposed to these necessities is the elemental fact of 1950: The enemy of the free world is implacably determined to destroy the free world.**

This enemy cannot surrender and cannot make peace. The makers and leaders of Stalinist thought have said again and again and again that the object of Soviet Communism is "the victory of Communism throughout the world." They have also said that this victory is essential to the safety and welfare of the Soviet Union itself. Their own system is so grounded upon this objective that it has become a driving necessity; to abandon it would be to invite the collapse of their system and the destruction of themselves.

**There can be no compromise and no agreement with Soviet Communism. It is not merely that Soviet Communists refuse to fulfill agreements. It is that they use compromise and agreement to destroy those with whom they compromise and agree. Any compromise, any agreement can only be, so far as the Communists are concerned, a further stage in the war which they continually wage.**

Every relevant act and attitude of Soviet Communism during the first years of the atomic age compels the conclusion that any atomic agreement acceptable to the Communists would be used by them as every other agreement has been used—to further "the victory of Communism throughout the world."

When and in what situations Soviet Communism will proceed from informal war to shooting war is unpredictable. It is conceivable that the Soviet Communists will not choose shooting war as the method of final decision. Stalin him-

This week LIFE appraises the military defenses of the U.S. in the light of the military capacity of the Soviet Union. This appraisal is undertaken in awareness that the problem of U.S. defense is not entirely a military problem. The American people could make no worse mistake than to assume that there is safety in military defense alone, however massive and costly the defense may become.

Then why undertake such an appraisal?

First, although there is no sure safety in military defense alone, there is sure ruin in any miscalculation or neglect of military defense.

Second, the wisdom and adequacy with which the officials who are in charge of U.S. policy calculate the defense necessities of the time provide a measure of the wisdom and adequacy with which they calculate the total necessities of the time.

The net showing of our report is that the defense necessities of the U.S. have been avoidably underestimated by the President, by his Secretary of Defense and (to the extent that they have participated in final policy decisions) by the chiefs of the military services. Not in extenuation of these officials but to indicate the scale of the turnaround in attitudes and policy now required, this must be added:

The official estimate of U.S. defense necessities has on the whole been welcomed by the U.S. Congress, the public and the press. The dominant desire has been to let the post-war economy run its course toward full civilian abundance. Most everybody had come to realize that the U.S. was in something called "the world conflict," that the conflict might even be called a kind of war and that a certain amount of dollars and goods had to be put up for the fight against Communism, which most everybody had come to detest. But hardly anybody really thought that the U.S. was really in a real war, a war for survival that might cut into the civilian economy and take more out of it than the U.S. has as yet been willing to pony up.

Now, chunk by chunk, the walls of illusion are falling away.

fact. This is fatefully true of all too many of the men who mold and execute Western thought and policy.

Consider Dean Acheson, the U.S. Secretary of State. He recognizes more and more of the separate facts of the conflict, but he still shrinks from the final fact. On Feb. 8 Mr. Acheson said in carefully considered statement that the Soviet system "is incompatible with a world situation which is based on peace" and concluded that only agreements based on the facts of power mean anything. So far so good—the statement was a decided advance on anything Mr. Acheson or any other Administration spokesman had said previously. Yet Mr. Acheson, speaking of "the achievement of peace," seemed to assume (as he has always assumed) a point at which accommodation if not formal agreement with Soviet Communism would be possible.

### NOW THERE IS NO TIME FOR LEARNING

Or consider Mr. Acheson's boss and admirer, President Truman. In an authorized interview with the *New York Times* the President said last week that he had given up any hope of meaningful agreement with the Soviet Union some years ago (although he has been talking confidently of getting over-all agreement within the past year). He said that in 1948 he wanted to send Chief Justice Fred Vinson to Moscow to "straighten out Stalin" and would have done so if the campaign had not been on. He indicated that he still has this in mind to do "some time." He also said (as paraphrased by the *Times*), "The real trouble with the Russians is that they are still suffering from a complex of fear and inferiority where we are concerned." Evidently the President still does not understand the real trouble with the Soviet Communists. It is, as cannot be said too often, their fixed purpose to promote by every possible means the destruction of all non-Communist societies.

Urgent demands for "one more talk with Stalin" are heard on every hand. Another talk with Stalin may be in order. But not on

# THE NATURE

# OF THE ENEMY

a guilty conviction that the West is somehow failing to do all that it might to achieve agreement with a foe who makes agreement impossible. However inspired they may seem, however deep the yearning they may assuage, statements which elide or overlook the dedicated enmity of Soviet Communism are so much grist for the Soviet mill of guilt.

Official and public understanding of the Soviet enemy has advanced considerably since Yalta and Potsdam. It has improved appreciably in the last year or so. Statesmen learn. We all learn. But now there is no more time for learning.

Two aspects of Soviet Communism deserve special attention. They suggest that even the Communist mind is not immune to the pressures of the time—and that the first duty and best hope of the free world is to gird and guard its strength. These aspects are:

1) Rigid in purpose though it is, rigid in attitude though it always seems, Soviet Communism has its own peculiar doctrine of change to meet changing circumstance.

2) Soviet Communists are schooled to believe that the final assault must come only when the forces of anti-Communism are so rotted and so weak, and when the forces of Communism are so strong, that the outcome is calculably certain. Stalin himself has told his followers again and again that they must wait . . . wait . . . wait until the world situation is "ripe" for victory.

## WATCH FOR A SHIFT, BUT NEVER COUNT ON IT

Anything that smacks of departure from the fixed doctrine of Soviet Communism is justified to the faithful on the ground that the doctrine has been newly "enriched by experience." In the past this theory of enrichment has never altered the end purposes of Soviet Communism. But it has cloaked many important shifts of immediate aim and attitude—from revolutionary internationalism to Soviet nationalism, and then back to the present militant internationalism, for example. No less for Soviet Communism than for the free world, the age of obliteration is likely to be a most "enriching" experience. The fact that atomic enrichment has as yet had no discernible effect in Moscow need not mean that it will never have.

What is needed is a precise yardstick by which to measure what to hope for and not to hope for. As we see it, the proper yardstick runs something like this:

To hope for any slackening or change of Communist purpose is worse than idle. To hope for any lasting agreement, balance of force, accommodation of aim and circumstance which will enable the two worlds of freedom and Communism to live side by side in permanent peace is worse than idle. But to hope that the prospect of mutual

obliteration will sink in upon and affect the guiding minds of Soviet Communism is not idle. To hope in turn that it will alter the enemy's calculation of what pays and does not pay—of what does and does not constitute a situation assumed to be "ripe" for final Communist assault—is not idle. To hope further that the prospect of mutual obliteration will seep home to the peoples of the Communist world, as it is now seeping home to the peoples of the free world, is not idle. To hope finally that the enormous pressures engendered by these processes of realization will compel a shift of Soviet Communism's attitude toward the uses and control of ultimate weapons is not idle. To watch for such a shift—never to count upon it, never to mistake it for a fundamental change of purpose, but always to watch for and seize upon it if it occurs—is the task of Western statesmanship.

## THE SUPREME QUESTION: HOW STRONG IS FREEDOM?

We have said, the free world must know its enemy. But knowing the enemy is not enough.

The free world must know itself. It must know—it must never forget—that its freedom and its strength are one. Without freedom it cannot have strength. Without strength it cannot preserve freedom. Without the will for freedom it cannot have the strength of freedom.

At this hour of this age these are not empty words. They have a very present meaning for free men, and especially for free Americans who guard the source and center of the free world's strength.

The danger and the power of obliteration on a nuclear scale are new to mankind. Only now, five years after Hiroshima, is the prospect coming home in its full meaning to Americans. As it must for all men, it will affect the lives, the ways, the standards of Americans. The supreme question—and the sooner it is spelled out the better—is whether it will alter the American idea and the American love of freedom.

The national habit, the good habit, is to say as a matter of course that freedom is something to enjoy, to defend, if need be to die for (though preferably not in person). The habit and the idea of freedom have been stronger than any force yet arrayed against them. Are they stronger, will they be stronger than the prospect and power of obliteration? The accustomed "what is life without freedom?" takes on an unaccustomed meaning when there is the prospect of no life. What price the free life in the free society, free men will ask, if to defend freedom is to risk all life and all society?

These are the questions, this is the risk that Americans will be living with until further notice.

## WHAT TO READ IN 1950

LIFE herewith offers a check list of recommended books, available at stores or libraries, for the reader who wants to bone up on the problems we have found.

### THE ATOM

EXPLAINING THE ATOM, by Selig Hecht, Viking Press, 1947, \$2.75. The best primer of atomic information we have found.

THE SMYTH REPORT (Atomic Energy for Military Purposes), Princeton University Press, 1946, \$2. Still the most complete repository of information on the A-bomb.

NO PLACE TO HIDE, by David V. Bradley; Little, Brown & Co., 1948, \$2. All about radiation at Bikini, and none of it pleasant.

MODERN ARMS AND FREE MEN, by Vannevar Bush, Simon & Schuster, 1949, \$3.50. The boss of wartime U.S. science describes the newest weapons of war, argues that free science can beat slave science.

### THE ENEMY

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION (BOLSHEVIKS), by a Soviet Communist commission, International Publishers, 1939, \$2. Still official, still revealing on ultimate Communist purposes. To be read with salt.

PROBLEMS OF LENINISM (Selected Writings of Josef Stalin), International Publishers, 1942, \$1.50. Propaganda, of course, but there's a lot to be learned in and between the lines about the nature of Stalinism.

LENIN (A Biography), by David Shub, Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1948, \$5. Anti-Communist light on the priest of Marxism.

STALIN: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY, by Isaac Deutscher, Oxford University Press, 1949, \$5. Heavy going, but a wonderful account of the life and mind of the Kremlin's master.

### THE WORLD CONFLICT

ROOSEVELT AND HOPKINS, by Robert E. Sherwood, Harper & Bros. \$6. Friendly, but also the best account yet of how things got in the present mess.

MY THREE YEARS IN MOSCOW, by Lieut. General Walter Bedell Smith, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1950, \$3.75. Why you can't make friends with the Russians when you try.

SPEAKING FRANKLY, by James F. Byrnes, Harper & Bros., 1947, \$3.50. Restrained, specific, convincing in its account of Soviet hostility during Mr. Byrnes's tenure as Secretary of State.

THE COMING DEFEAT OF COMMUNISM, by James Burnham, John Day Co., Inc., 1950, \$3.50. A forcefully presented formula for victory without war: get on the offensive, don't be scared, step up political, economic and psychological counterattack.



AT MRS. ROOSEVELT'S TELEVISION "TEA," DR. HANS BETHE READS A STATEMENT WHILE DAVID LILENTHAL (SECOND FROM RIGHT) REGISTERS DISAGREEMENT

## THE SOUL-SEARCHERS FIND NO ANSWER

**In the face of the world crisis and the H-bomb they foresee annihilation but not how to forestall it**

The melancholy state of world affairs and President Truman's decision to make the hydrogen bomb set off three weeks of soul-searching on the part of American scientists and statesmen. Some considered only the moral issues, others merely the practical issues. But most wrestled with both—and with thoughts of the U.N. and American and Russian military potential as well. None found a real answer.

As the thinkers stood in what many deeply believed to be the shadow of death, some found comfort in groups. Thus 12 top scientists, members of the American Physical Society, spoke in unison: "We believe that no nation has the right to use such a bomb, no matter how righteous its cause. This bomb is no longer a weapon of war, but a means of extermination of whole populations. Its use would be a betrayal of all standards of morality. . . ."

In New York another group—the most august that gathered anywhere to discuss the problem—issued no joint statement but several individual ones. This occurred on Feb. 12, when Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt presided over the first of her series of television "teas." Among the guests (*left to right, above*) were Dr. Hans Bethe, physicist at Cornell; Senator Brien McMahon, chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy; David Lilienthal, recently retired head of the Atomic Energy Commission, and Dr. Robert Oppenheimer, president of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. "Naturally," said Mrs. Roosevelt, "there can be only one subject we can deal with—and that must be the hydrogen bomb and the future

of the atomic energy program and its direct effect upon our future lives."

Said Dr. Oppenheimer, "The decision . . . to make or not to make the hydrogen bomb is rooted in complex technical things, but they touch the very basis of our morality. It is a grave danger for us that these decisions are taken on the basis of facts held secret."

Then the broadcast switched to Princeton, where Dr. Albert Einstein phrased the problem and offered one solution. ". . . Annihilation of any life on earth has been brought within the range of technical possibilities . . . Is there any way out. . . ? Solemn renunciation of violence . . . is undoubtedly necessary. Such renunciation, however, can only be effective if . . . a supranational . . . body is set up. . . ." But neither Dr. Einstein nor the others suggested how a world state can now be established. Later Dr. Bethe said, "Let us state . . . that we will never be the first to use hydrogen bombs." Senator McMahon repeated his proposal for a worldwide Marshall Plan. Then the program ended with the words of Mrs. Roosevelt: "May God grant us all the wisdom to find the true path to peace through cooperation with the other nations of the world."



EINSTEIN CALLS FOR WORLD STATE



Soul-Searchers CONTINUED

## A GENERAL DEPLORES IGNORANCE AND A SCHOOLBOY SEES DEATH



DR. JAMES B. CONANT

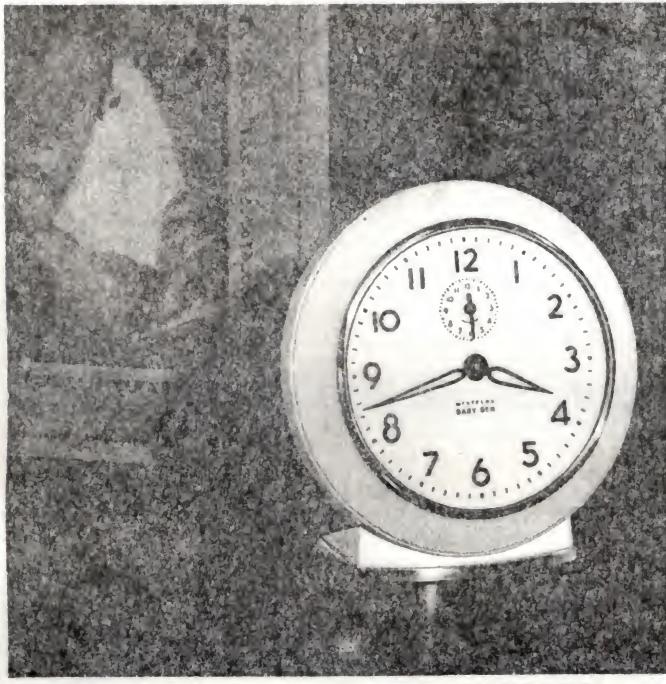


GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Elsewhere other American leaders found themselves in agreement with Dr. Robert Oppenheimer. General Dwight Eisenhower said, "I can't go along with those who believe we should hide the horror of the H-bomb in ignorance. I can see no good in ignorance. From the beginning of time, every invention of mankind has been capable of two uses, good and evil. It is up to the moral fiber of mankind to decide to which use an invention is put. But certainly at this time, faced as we are with a godless opponent, I do not believe we should bury our heads in the sand." Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard, was shocked because "the simple fact is that many important decisions are being made in Washington today without adequate evaluation."

But no matter what had surrounded the making of the decision, the fact remained that it had been made and reactions to it soon came from all over the world. Returning from Germany, U.S. Commissioner John J. McCloy said, "I am glad of President Truman's decision. If there were an oxygen bomb that would be bigger than the H-bomb, I would build it." In Rome the *Vatican* newspaper announced that "it is to be deplored of course that human society should have come to such a pass, and this is a sad commentary on the world's inability to insure peace except by force."

but then went on to justify American manufacture of the bomb because of the "mysterious power" explosions in Russia. In Washington, Senator Millard Tydings said, "Our failure to build while other nations are building the H-bomb conceivably could . . . destroy our own security as well as dismember the democratic, liberty-loving world." In *Air Affairs* Bernard Baruch, whose proposal for international control of atomic energy has been blocked for almost four years by Russia in the U.N., wrote, "Every effort must be pressed to maintain our overwhelming advantage in the development of atomic



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**Soul-Searchers** CONTINUED



DR. VANNEVAR BUSH



DR. HAROLD C. UREY

But atomic defense was no easily solved problem. Dr. Vannevar Bush told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "The only way to defend yourself against any kind of bomb is to stop the airplane or carrier before it gets to the target, or to bomb the place that manufacturing the bomb before it gets started. I know of no way to detonate an atomic bomb—or any other kind—once it is on its way. Dr. Harold C. Urey warned that atomic bombs in the holds of ships could easily be sneaked into the harbors of the U.S. or friendly nations, and there exploded or employed as the instruments of international extortion. Dr. Ralph Lapp, head of the Navy's nuclear research division, said, "Horrible as it may sound, we must be prepared to lose 10 to 15 million people in the first day of the superblitz. In certain sense we are like the man who lives in a tar-paper shack and develops a flame thrower to protect himself."

Meanwhile the soul-searching of the leaders did not seem to upset the plain citizens of the nation. General Lucius D. Clay said, "So long as Americans are thinking about it, they will do the right thing. But there was evidence on every hand that many Americans were by no means ready to think about it. In Chicago a lawyer summed up one widely held attitude with, "I've ceased to even think about the prospect of war. The whole thing is so overwhelmingly depressing that I am glad I'm not running the government right now, that I can go about my own daily business." In Boston a business executive put it this way: "Maybe we're building up an immunity. The world keeps going from crisis to crisis, and they cry 'Wolf!' so often that we don't pay much attention to it." In Kansas City a cafe owner said, "The only people talking about war are those who stand to make some money out of it. The boys who were in the last war and the parents who lost sons don't want any part of it."

But in Los Angeles a 14-year-old schoolboy named Maitland Hardiman, asked by his teacher to write a short composition as an exercise in the use of words, did so. He lacked the facility of the scientists and the statesmen, and he used one horrible word 11 times while he was writing only 49. The word he used was the one that underlay the thinking of them all. The soul-searchers tidily tripped around it, but the schoolboy boldly picked it up and swung it like a sledge hammer. "The hydrogen bomb reeks with death. Death, death to thousands. A burning, searing death, a death that is horrible, lasting death. The most horrible death man has invented, the destroy-



DR. RALPH LAPP